

CALFED Operations Group
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Winter-run chinook salmon:

The final report on aerial redd surveys conducted in the upper Sacramento River indicate the number of winter-run chinook spawning has more than doubled this year compared to the same time period last year (1388 redds vs 576 redds respectively as of 9/16). The Bureau of Reclamation has exceeded the 56°F temperature requirement in the last four days and is modeling alternatives to reduce temperatures.

Winter run chinook counts at Red Bluff Diversion Dam and the carcass survey in the upper Sacramento River have been completed. DFG will provide information on the winter run chinook spawner population in October.

Steelhead and Spring-run Chinook:

Fish Salvage Facilities report no salmon or steelhead loss or salvage this month, however Mitten Crab numbers are increasing to 310/week at the CVP and 27/week at the SWP.

Spring-run chinook salmon have started to spawn in the upper Sacramento River. Aerial redd surveys have observed 14 redds in one flight so far. Surveys have been limited by the recent fires and terrorist attacks.

Field surveys have been completed in Mill, Deer, and Butte creeks and estimates of the populations of spring run chinook spawners in these tribes will be available in October.

On August 17, 2001, NMFS published a proposed 4(d) rule for the Central Valley spring run chinook Evolutionary Significant Unit (ESU) in the Federal Register. The proposed rule would prohibit "take" pursuant to Section 9 of the ESA, but also creates 10 categories of exceptions to the take limits such as: recreational fishing, hatchery operations, scientific research, road maintenance, water diversion screening, and municipal/industrial development activities. NMFS is conducting public hearings and comments can be received until October 1, 2001 in our Long Beach Office. After review of the comments NMFS will issue a final rule by December 31, 2001.

Reclamation and DWR have been able to meet the new temperature compliance points required in the OCAP biological opinion in the Feather River, Stanislaus River and Clear Creek this summer. However, the American River remains to be a problem with lack of a sufficient cold water pool, shutter operations have maximized the cold water available. The CDFG monitoring program is still reporting young-of-year steelhead in good condition down to the Watt Avenue Bridge.